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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/849,721

05/20/2004

Mark A. Hochwalt

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08/30/2005

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EXAMINER

CHOI, FRANK I

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

1616

DATE MAILED: 08/30/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/849,721

Applicant(s)

HOCHWALT ET AL.

Examiner

Frank I. Choi

Art Unit

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 10 June 2005.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 50-107 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 50-107 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 50-107 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Marcus et al. (US Pat. 4,826,497) in view of EP 0 509 409, Peterson et al. (US Pat. 5,780,020) and DE 19837539 (Abstract).

Marcus et al. teach fibrous absorbent articles containing a zeolite having at least about 90 percent framework of tetrahedral oxides units being SiO₂ tetrahedra, a sorptive capacity for water of less than 10 weigh percent when measure at 25 degrees Celsius and 4.6 torr, and a pore diameter of at least 5.5 Angstroms, where the water of hydration is removed (Column 3, lines 40-68, Column 4, lines 1-35). It is taught that other components such as medicants, other absorbents and adsorbents, such as sodium bicarbonate and clinoptilolite (Column 7, lines 23-29). It is taught that clinoptilolite is a preferred odor suppressant (Column 3, lines 32-35). It is disclosed that high zeolites, such as Abscents®, are preferred over the intermediate zeolites for control of odors associated with sulfur compounds (Column 17, lines 60-68, Column 18, lines 1-5).

EP 0 509 409 teach feminine products having a combination of acidic, basic and neutral deodorants and that that acidic particles having a pH of less than 7 are suitable as deodorants of basic compounds, that sodium bicarbonate is suitable as a deodorant of acidic compounds and

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that Abscents® and Smellrite ® are preferred pH neutral odor absorbing materials as they retain most of their absorbent capacity in moist conditions (pgs. 4,5).

Peterson et al. teach that antimicrobial agents, such as zinc oxide, are used in deodorant products to help to control odor by controlling bacteria or fungi (Column 4, lines 50-68, Column 5, lines 1-23). Peterson et al. discloses that the zeolites of the claimed invention are suitable for use in invention of Peterson et al. (See Peterson et al., Column 4, lines 58-61).

DE 19837539 (Abstract) teaches that maleic or fumaric acids are effective deodorants.

The difference between the prior art and the claimed invention is that the prior art does not expressly disclose the combination of the claimed acids, the claimed synthetic zeolite and metal or metal oxides. However, the prior art amply suggests the same as it is known the deodorant products contain the claimed acids, the claimed synthetic zeolites and the claimed metal or metal oxides for odor control. As such, it would have been well within the skill of and one of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to modify the prior art as above with the expectation that the addition of the acids, sodium bicarbonate, clinoptilolite and metal oxides would improve odor control.

One of ordinary skill in the art would be motivated to add zinc oxide as zinc oxide is disclosed to control odors by acting as an antimicrobial agent, would be motivated to add an acid having a pH of less than 7 as said acids are disclosed to control odors from basic compounds and would be motivated to use Smellrite® or Abscent® as the same are disclosed to retain most of their absorbent capacity in moist conditions with the expectation that the combination would be more effective as the combination would work against odors resulting from various sources.

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The claimed acids are clearly encompassed by the disclosure of EP 0 509 409. EP 0 509 409 specifically discloses the following acids, maleic acid, stearic acid and malonic acid. Maleic acid appears to be structurally similar to aspartic acid (adds amino group substituent to carbon chain, removes double bond) and fumaric acid (trans isomer). Malonic acid appears structurally similar to fumaric acid (increases carbon chain by 1 carbon, adds double bond). As indicated above, the acids disclosed in EP 509 409 are disclosed to be effective in controlling odors. Further, as indicated above, the specifically disclosed acids in EP 509 409 appear to be structurally similar to the claimed acids and the prior art teaches that maleic and fumaric acid are effective deodorants. "An obviousness rejection based on similarity in chemical structure and function entails the motivation of one skilled in the art to make a claimed compound, in the expectation that compounds similar in structure will have similar properties." In re Payne, 203 USPQ 245, 254 (CCPA 1979). See also In re Dillon, 16 USPQ2d 1897 (Fed. Cir. 1991). As such, one of ordinary skill in the art would expect that homologues of maleic acid, stearic acid and malonic acid, including aspartic and fumaric, would have similar deodorant activity.

"It is prima facie obvious to combine two compositions each of which is taught by the prior art to be useful for the same purpose, in order to form a third composition to be used for the very same purpose.... [T]he idea of combining them flows logically from their having been individually taught in the prior art." In re Kerkhoven, 205 USPQ 1069, 1072 (CCPA 1980) (citations omitted) (Claims to a process of preparing a spray-dried detergent by mixing together two conventional spray-dried detergents were held to be prima facie obvious.). See also In re Crockett, 126 USPQ 186 (CCPA 1960) (Claims directed to a method and material for treating cast iron using a mixture comprising calcium carbide and magnesium oxide were held

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unpatentable over prior art disclosures that the aforementioned components individually promote the formation of a nodular structure in cast iron.); and *Ex parte Quadranti*, 25 USPQ2d 1071 (Bd. Pat. App. & Inter. 1992) (mixture of two known herbicides held *prima facie* obvious). As such, it would be obvious to combine deodorants together with the expectation that the combination would also have deodorant properties.

Examiner has duly considered Applicant's arguments but deems them unpersuasive.

In response to applicant's arguments against the references individually, one cannot show nonobviousness by attacking references individually where the rejections are based on combinations of references. See *In re Keller*, 208 USPQ 871 (CCPA 1981); *In re Merck & Co.*, 231 USPQ 375 (Fed. Cir. 1986). Further, the test for obviousness is not whether the features of a secondary reference may be bodily incorporated into the structure of the primary reference; nor is it that the claimed invention must be expressly suggested in any one or all of the references. Rather, the test is what the combined teachings of the references would have suggested to those of ordinary skill in the art. See *In re Keller*, 208 USPQ 871 (CCPA 1981).

Marcus et al. is not required to recite all the components of Applicant's claimed invention. Further, the use of clinoptilolite as an odor suppressant does not teach away from the claimed invention. The reason or motivation to modify the reference may often suggest what the inventor has done, but for a different purpose or to solve a different problem. It is not necessary that the prior art suggest the combination to achieve the same advantage or result discovered by applicant. *In re Linter*, 173 USPQ 560 (CCPA 1972); *In re Dillon*, 16 USPQ2d 1897 (Fed. Cir. 1990), cert. denied, 500 U.S. 904 (1991).

As indicated above, the EP patent does not have to teach all components of the claimed invention. Applicant's indicates that citric acid is unstable if used in Applicant's product, however, Applicant's claims do not exclude citric acid. In any case, disclosed examples and preferred embodiments do not constitute a teaching away from a broader disclosure or nonpreferred embodiments. In re Susi, 169 USPQ 423 (CCPA 1971). "A known or obvious composition does not become patentable simply because it has been described as somewhat inferior to some other product for the same use." In re Gurley, 31 USPQ2d 1130, 1132 (Fed. Cir. 1994). The EP patent actually teaches that the amount of acid will vary depending upon the type of product that it is incorporated into and the particular odors that it is designed to control (pg. 4, lines 40, 41). As such, amounts of acid higher than 10% are suggested by the EP Patent. With respect to Applicant's specification not disclosing any formulation utilizing less than 24%, limitations from the specification are not read into the claims. See *In re Van Geuns*, 26 USPQ2d 1057 (Fed. Cir. 1993).

With respect to zinc oxide, as indicated above, the motivation or reason to use zinc oxide need not be the same as Applicant's reason. Examiner notes that Applicant has provided no evidence that it takes zinc oxide at least about 20 minutes. Further, the foreign patent abstracts are not required to disclose all components of Applicant's claimed invention. Finally, contrary to Applicant's arguments, the motivation to combine the references has been set forth above.

Therefore, the claimed invention, as a whole, would have been *prima facie* obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made, because every element of the invention has been collectively taught by the combined teachings of the references.

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Conclusion

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the date of this final action.

A facsimile center has been established in Technology Center 1600. The hours of operation are Monday through Friday, 8:45 AM to 4:45 PM. The telecopier number for accessing the facsimile machine is 571-273-8300.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Frank Choi whose telephone number is (571)272-0610. Examiner maintains a flexible schedule. However, Examiner may generally be reached Monday-Friday, 8:00 am – 5:30 pm (EST), except the first Friday of the each biweek which is Examiner's normally scheduled day off.

If attempts to reach the Examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the Examiner's Supervisor, Mr. Gary Kunz, can be reached at 571-272-0887. Additionally, Technology Center 1600's Receptionist and Customer Service can be reached at (571) 272-1600.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

FIC August 28, 2005



SABIHA QAZI, PH.D
PRIMARY EXAMINER